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by Maspin in Breast Cancer

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Table of Contents

Cover.....	1
SF 298.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Body.....	4
Key Research Accomplishments.....	7
Reportable Outcomes.....	7
Conclusions.....	7
References.....	7
Appendices.....	7
Figures.....	8

Introduction

Background: Maspin is a unique member of the serpin family that shares extensive homology with monocyte-neutrophil elastase inhibitor, PAI-2 and other serpins. Initially identified as a class II tumor suppressor gene, maspin has been shown to inhibit invasion and motility of mammary tumors. When maspin gene was introduced into breast tumor cells, it was demonstrated that tumor transfectants expressing maspin exhibited significant decrease in breast tumor growth and metastasis in nude mice. Maspin gene expression is not detected in most breast tumors and loss of its expression is correlated with tumor invasiveness. Maspin is also found to be a potent angiogenesis inhibitor. Other than its anti-tumor function, maspin clearly plays an important role in normal development. We have demonstrated that transgenic mice overexpressing maspin in mammary gland inhibit alveolar development and mammary cell differentiation, and maspin transgenic mice had a protective role against breast tumor growth and metastasis. Overall, maspin is a gene with an important function in both normal mammary development and breast tumorigenesis.

Objective/Hypothesis: Based on the previous work by my laboratory and other colleagues, I hypothesize that maspin possesses multiple functionality that requires its interaction with multiple target proteins. Maspin could act intracellularly or be secreted to act in a paracrine fashion on adjacent cells. I propose to isolate maspin target(s) by combined genetic and biochemical approaches. Once the target is identified, deletion and mutagenesis studies will be carried out to identify the functional domain of maspin that is responsible for such protein-protein interaction. Finally, such interaction will be verified in mammalian cells.

The specific aims for this three-year proposal are:

- (1) Identification of maspin target protein by genetic and biochemical approaches, and (2) characterization of the functional domain of maspin responsible for protein-protein interaction.

Body

Materials and methods

Yeast library

A HeLa cDNA library has been obtained from Dr. Roger Brent at Harvard Medical School. Yeast EGY48 cells were available at the PI's laboratory.

Yeast two-hyb assay

Yeast EGY48 cells will be transformed with LexA/maspin fusion plasmid and a LexA/lacZ reporter and selected on yeast Ura- and His- plates. The transformed yeast cells will be used to screen a HeLa library consisting of B42/HeLa cDNA fusions. The putative positive clones should be able to grow in the Ura-, His-, Trp- and Leu- plate containing galactose as the carbon resource and become blue in the presence of X-gal.

Antibodies

Antibody for HA tag of the fusion protein was purchased from Sigma. Polyclonal anti-maspin antibody was made by Zymed, Inc. as a custom service. All secondary antibodies were purchased from Zymed, Inc.

Western analysis

Total yeast proteins were isolated from cells. Protein extracts were prepared by lysing the cells in RIPA buffer. Total 100 ug protein extract will be loaded for electrophoresis. Western blot analysis will be carried out using HA and maspin antibodies to detect maspin and its interacting proteins.

Adhesion assay

LN5-rich matrix was prepared using MCF10A-deposited matrix, which deposited only laminin-5. Briefly, cells were grown until confluent in a 96 well dish. Wells were washed with PBS and treated with fresh 20mM NH₄OH for 5 min, or until cells are completely blown off. Wells were washed extensively with water and blocked with 10mg/ml of heat-inactivated BSA in PBS (80°C 15 min) for 1h at RT. Cells were harvested with enzyme-free cell dissociation solution (Cell & Mol. Technologies, Inc.) washed with serum-free DMEM/F12 medium and incubated with antibodies or recombinant proteins for 30 min at 37°C. 20,000 cells/well were plated and allowed to adhere for 30 min at 37°C. Wells were washed with PBS and adhered cells were fixed with 5% glutaraldehyde and stained with crystal violet. Dye was solubilized in 10% acetic acid and absorbance was determined at 590 nm.

Results and Discussion

Task 1. Identification of putative receptor of maspin

Months 1-36.

Identifying integrin β 1 as a maspin interacting protein

We had carried out some receptor binding experiment. Maspin proteins made in E.coli were labeled by 125-I and used in the cell based binding assay, using normal mammary epithelial cells and MDA231 breast cancer cells. Although we did not characterize the binding kinetics (Kd and Bmax), we were able to shown that extracellular maspin could bind to the cell surface.

To investigate a role of maspin on cell-ECM interactions in normal mammary epithelial cells, MCF10A mammary cells which express very high level of endogenous maspin were treated with recombinant maspin or GST control at various dosages and cells were allowed to attach to the matrix for 30 minutes. Maspin significantly increased cell adhesion in a dose dependent manner (Fig.1A). We then treated MCF10A cells with anti-maspin serum or control serum and cells were allowed to attach to the matrix for 30 minutes. Confocal microscopy showed that MCF10A cells had high level of maspin protein on the cell surface. A significant decrease in cell adhesion was observed when cells were treated with a polyclonal anti-maspin antibody raised against the whole maspin protein but not an antibody raised specifically against the reactive site loop (RSL) domain of maspin. We then employed an RNA interference assay to specifically down-regulate maspin expression in these cells. Maspin siRNA-expressing cells

exhibited significantly less cell adhesion to their self-deposited matrix (data not shown). These data demonstrate that maspin positively modulates cell adhesion to the LN-5-rich ECM, and it does so in a rapid manner. We hypothesized that maspin might be associated with $\beta 1$ integrin (for reasons not mentioned here). To test this hypothesis we examined $\beta 1$ integrin and maspin co-immunoprecipitation. MCF10A whole cell extracts were immunoprecipitated with a maspin polyclonal antiserum and probed for $\beta 1$ integrin by immunoblotting. We detected a major band at around 110 kDa, in agreement with the molecular weight of $\beta 1$ integrin (Fig. 1A). In order to confirm the reciprocity of the interaction, $\beta 1$ integrin was immunoprecipitated from two MCF10A extracts prepared independently. Immunoblotting analysis with an anti-maspin antibody revealed maspin co-immunoprecipitation in MCF10A extracts (Fig. 1A). $\beta 1$ integrin immunoprecipitation was confirmed by reprobing the filter with anti- $\beta 1$ integrin. This result indicates that maspin and $\beta 1$ integrin are physically associated; suggesting that maspin may modulate cell adhesion by interfering with $\beta 1$ integrin-dependent cell-ECM interaction. In addition, maspin- $\beta 1$ integrin co-immunoprecipitation occurred in the presence of 1% Triton X-100, indicating that this interaction is very strong. We have also carried out immunostaining to co-localize maspin with $\beta 1$ integrin in mammary tissue. Using frozen tissue sections, we were able to colocalize maspin with $\beta 1$ integrin (Fig. 1B) in mammary ductal epithelial cells. These data are currently being summarized and a manuscript is in preparation. Not surprisingly, this study in mammary cells is supported by the findings from studies on the role of integrin $\beta 1$ in embryogenesis. The deletion of integrin $\beta 1$ completely duplicated the phenotypes observed in the maspin null embryos. For example, in $\beta 1$ -null embryos, endoderm morphogenesis was defective and the embryos die at E 5.5. Blastocyst outgrowths in the $\beta 1$ null embryos were blocked due to an inner cell mass failure. However, trophoblast function which depends on different integrins in the $\beta 1$ null embryos was largely normal; both the decidual reaction was induced and outgrowths on fibronectin coated substrates were observed. These similar phenotypes suggest again that the function of maspin is closely related to that of $\beta 1$ integrin.

Task 2. Identification of maspin target by yeast two-hybrid system

Months 1-36.

We have started to use the Hela cDNA library for yeast two hybrid screening. Briefly, yeast EGY48 cells were transformed with LexA/maspin fusion plasmid and a LexA/lacZ reporter and selected on yeast Ura- and His- plates. The transformed yeast cells were then transformed with Hela library consisting of B42/Hela cDNA fusions. In the last eight months, we have obtained over 200 candidate clones that were able to grow in the Ura-, His-, Trp- and Leu- plate containing galactose as the carbon resource and became blue in the presence of X-gal. Plasmids were isolated from these clones and retransformed to yeast cells to confirm the ability of these plasmid to confer x-gal inducibility. Over the 200 primary clones, 30 or so secondary clones were identified. Many plasmid sequenced contained nonsense coding sequences and were further eliminated. Seven clones contained cDNA sequences that are in-frame with LexA fusion. B-gal activity was analyzed for these clones (Fig.2). These clones were then retested in yeast two-hyb assay as well as in other in vitro and in vivo assays. Currently, we have focused on the CCT7 gene that is an actin-binding protein. In vitro translated CCT7 protein can be immunoprecipitated with maspin by maspin antibody. We are currently studying the maspin-CCT7 interaction in normal mammary epithelial MCF10A cells.

Task 3. Identification of maspin target by biochemical approach Month 6-36

Since we have identified B1 integrin as a maspin binding protein on cell surface, we begin to identify the functional domain of maspin that mediated cell surface function by a biochemical approach. We made several deletion and point mutation mutants of maspin for this study. These mutants include: Mas (1-139aa), Mas (1-228aa), Mas (229-375aa), Mas (140-375aa), Mas (140-340aa), Mas (1-340aa), and a point mutation of Arg to Gln at amino acid 340. These mutants were tested in cell adhesion assays to delineate the domains required for maspin-mediated cell adhesion. We treated MCF10A cells with recombinant proteins (including mutant maspins) in an adhesion assay. The result showed that a region between 140-225 aa of maspin was responsible for maspin mediated cell adhesion through integrin B1 (Fig.3). This study together with the data from the study of task 1 has been summarized for the preparation of a manuscript.

Key research accomplishments

We have identified integrin B1 as a maspin interacting protein on the cell surface and maspin acts to increase cell adhesion. The functional domain of maspin involved in this action has been identified. The yeast two hybrid screening has identified seven candidate clones (Fig.2). Among them, the CCT7 gene has been characterized to interact with maspin by IP-western assay and functional study in normal mammary epithelial cells is currently being carried out to further delineate the effect of such intracellular interaction on cell proliferation and migration.

Reportable outcome

A manuscript is being prepared for the study of maspin-integrin interaction.

Conclusion

Maspin is located both intracellularly and extracellularly and therefore has multiple target proteins. Through this study, we have identified on cell surface maspin binding partner and at least one intracellular maspin binding protein CCT7. These discoveries laid the foundation for identifying the molecular mechanism of maspin mediated tumor suppression. Further studies may help us develop new therapeutic tools for cancer treatment.

Reference

None

Appendices

None

Fig 1.

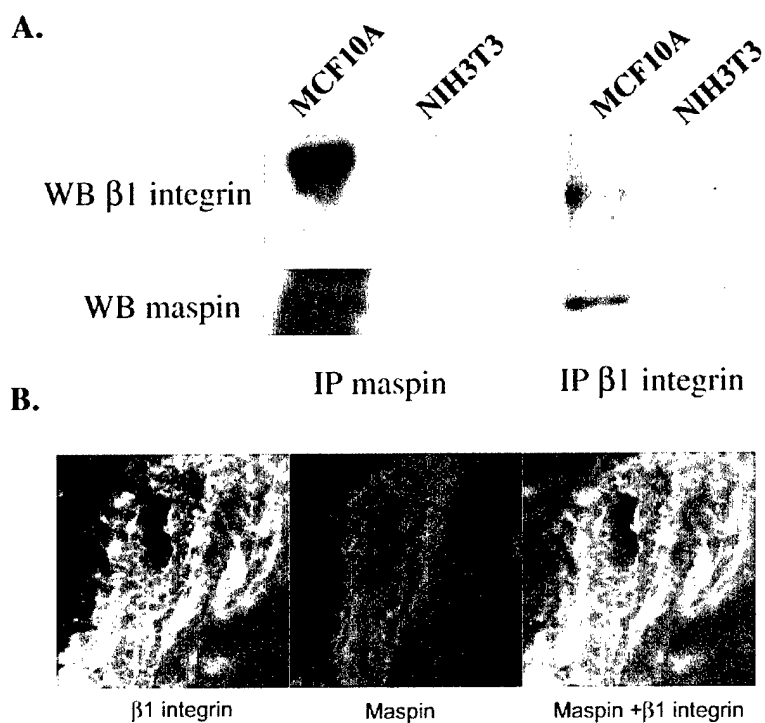
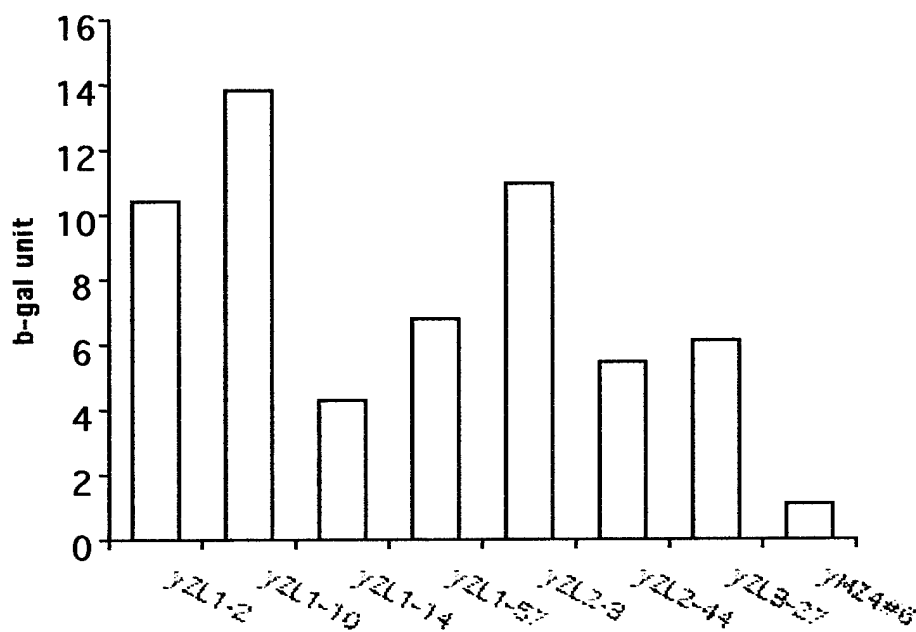


Fig.2 Maspin interacts with $\beta 1$ integrin. A. Reciprocal IP Western analysis identifies maspin- $\beta 1$ interaction. B. Colocalization of maspin and $\beta 1$ integrin in mammary ductal epithelial cell surface by confocal microscopy.

Fig.2 B-gal activity of seven maspin-interacting clones comparing to the control yMZA



See legend next page

Figure 2 Legend

Putative maspin target proteins identified from yeast two-hybrid assay

1.yZL1-2	chaperonin containing TCP1 subunit 7
2.yZL1-10	ferritin
3.yZL1-14	triosephosphate isomerase 1
4.yZL1-57	elongation translation factor 1
5.yZL2-3	phosphoglycerate (PGK1)
6.yZL2-44	CRM1 protein
7.yZL3-27	nucleolar protein ANKT

Fig.3. Effect of maspin deletion mutants on cell adhesion in MCF10A cells.

